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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Immediate Release.

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Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes announced today that the Fish and Wildlife Service will soon solicit bids on material and equipment needed to enlarge the Pribilof Islands by-products plant for the utilization of fur-seal carcasses.

An appropriation of \$135,000 was made recently by Congress for the purpose of constructing an addition to the present plant for the production of fur-seal meal and oil--by-products of the fur-seal industry. The plant is located on St. Paul Island, largest of the Pribilofs.

Seal carcasses, when processed, produce seal meal, valuable as a constituent of poultry feed, and oil, which is used chiefly in leather tanning.

Due to a lack of sufficient plant facilities in the Pribilof Islands last year only about 58,000 carcasses out of the record take of 117,164 could be processed. About 750,000 pounds of meal, worth \$26,000 were produced, and 75,258 gallons of oil, valued at \$61,000.

With the increase of the capacity of the St. Paul Island plant, it is expected that the production of oil will be substantially increased while the production of meal may be doubled.

The by-products plant on St. Paul Island was built at a time when the fur seal herd, by far the largest in the world, was much reduced in numbers. The herd now consists of some 2,500,000 animals. There is no by-products plant on St. George Island where about 20 percent of the sealing is done.

With a large, stabilized population of fur seals on the Pribilof Islands, the yield of skins and the production of by-products can be maintained at a high level in the future.